

# The Impact of Wildlife-Based Enterprises on Local Livelihoods and Conservation in Uganda

Wildlife Enterprise for Local Development (WELD) Project carried out by the African Wildlife Foundation with the assistance of the European Union



EUROPEAN UNION



AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

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THE AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION is an independent, nonprofit with a mission statement that the wildlife and wildlands of Africa have no equal. We work with people-our supporters worldwide and our partners in Africa to craft and deliver creative solutions for the long-term well being of Africa's remarkable species, their habitats and the people who depend on them. In 1998, AWF launched our AWF Heartlands program, an ambitious, large-scale approach to wildlife conservation. Heartlands are large landscapes of exceptional natural value-landscapes that include national parks plus adjacent private and community lands. In each Heartland, AWF works with all interested local landowners and organizations to provide generous habitat for healthy wildlife populations.

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THE WELD PAPERS identify key success factors and support services needed through in-depth consultations in four countries, quantitative and qualitative analysis of the commercial and economic performance of selective case studies. Staff of African Wildlife Foundation together with Caroline Ashley of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) has written the papers. The papers highlight the need for policy to recognize and build on the role of the private sector in mobilizing the necessary investment, marketing, management and technical resources to establish wildlife-based enterprises.

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# Executive Summary

## A. Background to the WELD Series

In East Africa today, wildlife enterprise is widely considered a promising development strategy for income-poor communities in wildlife-rich areas. Wildlife enterprise has complex goals and is expected to provide financial and social benefits as well as an incentive to conserve local wildlife.

Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and donors now support wildlife enterprises. Yet few have systematically assessed its impacts on development or conservation, or collected lessons learned to be applied in the future.

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) produced this paper as one of three research contributions to the emerging field of wildlife enterprise. Through its Wildlife Enterprise for Local Development (WELD) Project, AWF analyzed the national policy environment in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as seven illustrative cases from those three countries. The cases span a range of wildlife enterprise experience from butterfly farming to photographic and hunting safaris.

The WELD methodology that AWF developed and applied examines four key aspects of wildlife enterprise:

- Commercial viability
- Local economic impact
- Local livelihood impact
- Contribution to conservation.

This research led to conclusions about what works now and how to foster wildlife enterprises that can in future can contribute even more to development and conservation.

## B. General Policy Climate for Wildlife Enterprise

Until 1996, the Government of Uganda exercised exclusive control over wildlife management in that country. This approach evolved with the 1996 Uganda Wildlife Statute. This law continues State ownership of wildlife, but allows the government to grant user rights to communities, individuals, and businesses. The subsequent 1998 Land Act outlines four types of land tenure, yet provides little further clarity over wildlife management or rights.

The scope for wildlife enterprise development in Uganda is wide, with considerable potential for investment in both consumptive and non-consumptive ventures. Apart from wildlife and nature tourism, there are opportunities in ranching, hunting, farming, breeding programs, private and community wildlife sanctuaries.

However, no national framework for the development and management of wildlife enterprises in Uganda has yet been devised. Therefore, few private sector players have so far developed the capacity to launch and manage wildlife businesses.

## C. The Ugandan Case Studies

AWF selected three case studies to illustrate the status of legitimate wildlife enterprises in Uganda: 1) Bushara



Island Camp at Lake Bunyonyi; 2) Buhoma Rest Camp near Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, and 3) Amajembere Iwachu Campground at Mgahinga National Park. All are community-based enterprises.

## **D. Findings of the WELD Analysis of Local Impacts**

### **1) Commercial viability**

Commercial viability is the ability of the enterprise to make sustained profits—and the key indicator of its sustainability. Our research indicates that all three enterprises investigated are commercially viable, while also reaching some conservation and development objectives. In two cases—Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground return on sales falls within the industry norms of 20-50%; their return on investment falls within the norm of 10-30% for high-risk business like tourism.

In community based wildlife enterprise, economic return reflects a balance between the goals of profit maximization, economic and social development, and conservation.

AWF's review found that constraints to higher performance for the enterprises include:

- Lack of or weak management skills on the part of the community
- Financial and operational management of the enterprise is often skewed in favor of the elite within the community and suffers from a lack of transparency.
- Regional insecurity
- The inherent remoteness of rural communities, coupled with poorly developed infrastructure.

### **2) Local financial impacts**

The direct financial flows to individuals in the three Uganda cases are limited to a few dozen people employed in the enterprises: 11 local people work at Buhoma Rest Camp; 6 at Amajembere Iwachu Campground, and 35 at Bushara Island Camp. For these individuals and their families, the enterprise generates significant livelihood impacts. Wages are secure and consistent. Beyond daily needs, employees spend them on such activities as building, savings, and investment into micro-enterprises.

The multiplier effect is good at Bushara Island Camp and include boating in the lake; a cottage clothing industry; and an agro-forestry project for the community. The camp also runs a grinding mill as well as an orphanage for children orphaned by HIV. In contrast, no significant multiplier effect was observed for Buhoma Rest Camp or Amajembere Iwachu Campground.

### **3) Livelihood impacts**

Bushara Island Camp's spin-off enterprises, listed above, have significant effects on livelihoods in the wider community. The Amajembere Iwachu Campground and Buhoma Rest Camp have contributed towards social development projects like schools and support to the orphans. In addition, non-tangible benefits appear to include increased social cohesiveness, annual festivities, and associations among the stakeholder groups.

To the women's stakeholder group, the spinoff effects of the Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu community campground include the development of handcraft and basketry in the community. There are eight women's groups involved, and since the establishment of the Rest Camp, a total of about Shs 5.45 million has accrued to the women. Handcrafts and basketry are likely to be sustainable if community tourism is fully



developed, and new markets emerge beyond those coordinated by Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA).

#### **4) Conservation impacts**

Stakeholders tend to assume that wildlife-based enterprises will benefit the environment. In fact, however, a conscious effort must be made to include specific conservation effects among the enterprise's goals.

If it is difficult to plan for conservation impact, it is perhaps more difficult to determine the conservation effects of enterprises. For instance, the Bushara Island camp's agro-forestry program, meant to address soil erosion and restore soil fertility, will take time to bear fruit. And while the venture also aims to preserve the ecological integrity of Lake Bunyonyi, in recent years temporary and permanent camps have sprung up around the lake, calling any benefits into question. Environmental management guidelines for tourism activities around the lake need to be in place and enforced to preserve its integrity of the lake.

It is difficult to determine the extent to which the Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground have increased conservation. Benefits accruing to the wider community are few and skewed to the elite. In addition, the community's crops still suffer destruction from wildlife, and residents are still denied access to resources like timber in the parks.

### **E. Recommendations for furthering wildlife enterprise in Uganda**

To be successful, community wildlife enterprise initiatives in Uganda will require policy support as well as substantial technical assistance and training from NGOs and donors.

#### **1) The role of government**

Much can be done to improve the enabling policy and regulatory environment for wildlife enterprises in Uganda, including:

- Create an environment in which private sector/community enterprise partnerships can flourish by reducing bureaucracy, costs of borrowing capital, transaction and administrative costs imposed on the private sector investors
- Provide infrastructure, particularly in the parks located in some of the remote areas of the country, where road, water, electricity and communication facilities are still lacking
- Foster the participation of local communities and other stakeholders in planning, implementing and monitoring wildlife resources, through improved land tenure, rights over wildlife use and appropriate regulations
- The Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry could help Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) to standardize community tourism as its own product, separate from the traditional wildlife safaris and gorilla tourism. Specifically, the Ministry could strengthen UCOTA's capacity. Help UCOTA meet its administrative and operational costs. UCOTA's services are nation-wide; its 65 community enterprises need to be coordinated and supported with the appropriate funding levels. Currently, UCOTA is dependent on donors and Uganda Tourist Board (UTB) for its operations. Both these sources are unreliable and have often defaulted in their commitments.





## **2) NGO support to wildlife enterprise development**

To be most helpful, this would include:

- strengthening organizational structures to manage wildlife and wildlife income,
- developing the entrepreneurial and managerial skills required for identifying viable enterprise options, implementing operations and engaging the private sector (particularly tour operators) in mutually beneficial partnerships.
- promoting participatory processes for decisionmaking with stakeholders regarding resource use, revenue and conflicts.
- increasing the local community's awareness of their full rights.

## **3) Role for donors**

Wildlife enterprises can achieve complex goals (profit, development and conservation) though there is likely to be a trade off between them (e.g. a broader spread of benefits usually means lower profits), and hence a role for donors to play. The development and conservation objectives of these enterprises can increase costs and diminish financial profitability. The case studies show positive results from small, on-going donor subsidies to maintain an enterprise that is deliberately investing in complex goals rather than profit maximization.

## **4) Suggestions for communities to derive maximum benefits from wildlife enterprises**

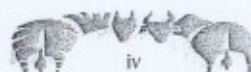
- Obtain training in basic enterprise management principles
- Establish unified organizations and fair, transparent management in local communities to facilitate partnering with the private sector to obtain capital, trained management, and marketing links.
- Promote participatory processes for decision making regarding resource use, revenue and conflicts.
- Increasing residents' awareness of their rights as wildlife trustees.

## **5) The way forward to stimulating and developing the greater Virungas as a regional tourist circuit**

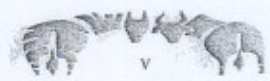
There is a need for a regional policy and legal framework to formalize a tourist circuit in the Greater Virungas. Regional cooperation would have far-ranging benefits for all three countries Uganda and also Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Developing such a circuit will require concerted efforts of the three countries both at national and grassroots level.

A strategy for developing a tourist circuit would include:

- Harmonizing the administration of the four national parks, for a common conservation program across the three borders
- Diversifying tourist products away from dependence on the mountain gorilla
- Developing a unified marketing strategy and booking process throughout the four parks



- Encouraging infrastructure development and communication facilities across the Virungas region.
- Facilitating socio-economic development of communities surrounding the national parks
- Encouraging private sector participation and development of community tourism
- Integrating the circuit into the tourism development framework and plans of the individual countries concerned.



# INTRODUCTION

Donors, governments and NGOs support wildlife enterprises for their perceived development and conservation potential. Yet little assessment is available of the conservation and development impacts of wildlife enterprises, and of the implications of experience to date for future wildlife enterprise support.

Through the WELD project AWF tried to assess net benefits flowing at the local level and their impact on conservation incentives. WELD is divided into two components – WELD-Community Conservation (CC) and WELD-Conservation, Economics and Commerce (CEC). WELD's overall objectives are 1) to integrate sustainable conservation and local development objectives at the local level, and 2) to strengthen the technical and organizational base for local wildlife enterprises. The objectives of the WELD-CEC component are to analyze the conditions necessary for effective wildlife enterprises among landholders, generate and disseminate a practical and replicable framework for wildlife enterprise development, and enhance capacity across the region for wildlife enterprise development.

The initial focus of the project was the development of the methodology<sup>2</sup> to provide a practical cost-effective approach to assessing the impacts of a wildlife enterprise in terms of:

- Commercial viability
- Local level financial, economic and livelihood impacts
- Impacts on other external stakeholders
- Contribution to conservation

With this methodology, AWF has been able to investigate seven cases in eastern Africa – two each in Kenya and Tanzania and three in Uganda. The enterprises assessed include wildlife tourism, hunting and farming.

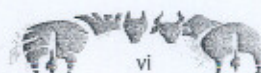
This study starts by highlighting the framework for enterprise development in Uganda with focus on the regulatory and policy environment, wildlife population status and distribution, potential economic returns under various use options and opportunities and constraints to wildlife enterprise development. It also gives an overview of wildlife enterprise development within the greater Virungas region focusing on the role of governments in both promoting and constraining enterprise development. While the Virunga region is divided by three states, we focus here on Uganda and Rwanda. DRC has been left out due to factors external to this study.

The next parts of this study consider four specific enterprises in the Virungas—three in Uganda and one in Rwanda. The Uganda case studies include 1) the Buhoma Community Campground adjacent to the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (BINP), 2) Amajembere Iwachu Campground adjacent to the Mgahinga National Park (MNP) and 3) the Bushara Island Camp on Lake Bunyoyini, some 17 Kms from Kabale town.

The subject of the Rwandan case study, ASOFERWA, was only two weeks old, precluding an in-depth analysis. However, our intention is that the Ugandan case studies will provide lessons for Rwandan enterprises as well because of similarities in culture, demography, terrain, and ecology.

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<sup>2</sup> For details of the methodology see the Handbook for Assessing the Economic and Livelihood Impacts of Wildlife Enterprises by Caroline Ashley with Joanna Elliott, George Sikoyo and Kristin Hanlon



# Wildlife Enterprise: The National Framework In Uganda

By Telly Eugene Muramira & George Michael Sikoyo

## 1.0 Background

Between 1971 to 1986, Uganda's wildlife numbers were reduced significantly due to political instability, indiscriminate commercial poaching, encroachment on protected areas, and economic stagnation. Since 1986, the stabilization of the political and economic situation has resulted in increased investments in the wildlife conservation sector in Uganda.

The tourism sector in Uganda grew at a rate of 34 percent per year between 1962 and 1971. Tourism was the third largest foreign exchange earner after coffee and cotton with a total number of tourist arrivals peaking at 85,000 visitors in 1970. The political upheavals of the 1970's and 1980's led to a major slump with recovery coming through in the mid 90's.

The direct annual contribution to the economy from tourism was US\$ 90 million by 1995 and it is now a major employer in the country.

## 2.0 The Overall Regulatory and Policy Environment

### 2.1 The Wildlife Policy

The Wildlife Policy of Uganda was ratified in 1995 and the policy advocates wider community involvement in wildlife conservation. Other aspects of the policy include developing tourism, providing increased revenue from wildlife, controlling trade in wildlife, adhering to international standards, improving organizational and legal structures for the management of wildlife.

### 2.2 Wildlife Legislation

The main wildlife management sectoral legislation in Uganda is the 1996 Wildlife Statute. The Statute encourages more public participation and commercial involvement and recognizes wildlife as a sustainable capital resource. The statute specified the framework regarding the management and use of national parks and wildlife by:

- Centralizing the administration of wildlife management by replacing the Game Department and the National Park Board of Trustees with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). The authority is charged with the management of wildlife within and outside protected areas.
- Broadening the definition of 'wildlife' to include wild plants and animals which migrate through Uganda in addition to native animals.
- Allowing access to and involvement in conservation by the private sector. It also allows the Executive Director of UWA to enter into any suitable commercial or collaborative arrangements.
- Provides for an increased scope in wildlife use rights.
- Introduced the concept of benefit sharing with the local communities. Under section 70(4), 20% of Park entry fees will be paid to the Local Government of the area surrounding the protected area where the fees are collected.



**Table 1: Areas of biodiversity value under UWA management and their potential**

Protected Areas	Potential
Mgahinga Gorilla National Park	Ecotourism
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park	Ecotourism
Kigezi Wildlife Reserve	Ecotourism and trophy hunting
Queen Elizabeth National Park	Ecotourism and filming
Kyambura Wildlife Reserve	Ecotourism and trophy hunting
Kibale National Park	Ecotourism and Selective Use
Ruwenzori Mountains National Park	Ecotourism and Mountaineering
Semuliki National Park	Ecotourism
Semuliki Valley Wildlife Reserve	Ecotourism and trophy hunting
Semuliki Flats C.H.A	Selective trophy hunting
Kaiso Tonya C.H.A	Wildlife ranching
Buhuka C.H.A	Wildlife ranching
Bugungu Wildlife Reserve	Ecotourism
Karuma Wildlife Reserve	Ecotourism
Murchison Falls National Park	Ecotourism and translocation

Very few protected areas are in this zone. However, significant populations of ungulates and primates are found in these areas mainly due to the presence of tsetse fly (*Glossina* spp.). In addition, ethnic groups inhabiting this area such as the Buganda and Busoga accord protection to various species of primates, ungulates, carnivores, rodents and even insects which are considered sacred totems.

Major conflicts arise in this zone between wildlife and agro-pastoral livelihood strategies. There are no government initiatives to compensate farmers or pastoralists for crop or livestock damage by wildlife. The granting of use rights to landowners who tolerate wildlife damage would contribute to bridging the gap between conservation and livelihoods.

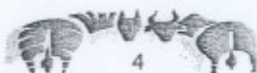
### **Wildlife Populations Outside Protected Areas**

The conservation of Uganda's wildlife has been mainly concentrated in gazetted protected areas. Wildlife outside of protected areas continue to experience limited investments in conservation management despite containing considerable wildlife populations. This translates into extremely limited data which are available on the population dynamics on public land and for policy-level decisions regarding these areas.

### **The Pastoral Areas of Karamoja, Ankole/Masaka and the Kafu Basin**

The Ankole/Masaka and Karamoja rangelands are areas of low human population density where livestock ranching and pastoralism are the main livelihood activities. Apart from large carnivores which were virtually exterminated by pastoralists, wildlife species have generally remained stable in this area but are threatened by commercial poaching.

The second threat to wildlife in this area is the overstocking of livestock and the resultant environmental degradation. Negative perceptions exist amongst pastoral communities with regards to protected areas and the competition for scarce resources and disease transmission from wildlife to livestock. It is the intention of UWA to enter into collaborative management of wildlife in these areas with ranchers, landowners and communities with the intention of enabling the stake-holder to profit from wildlife resources through the granting of wildlife use rights.



## 5.0. Potential economic returns under various use rights options

Research was undertaken to examine the potential economic returns under various use rights options.

### Potential returns from hunting

There is very limited potential for trophy hunting in which tourist hunters pay premium prices to hunt a wide range of animals including the big five. However, there is some scope for hunters who want to collect otherwise unobtainable species like the Uganda kob. It will only be economically viable for hunting operators to invest in areas where there is a species mix that attracts high cost safaris. The alternative is for the operator to spread the overhead by hunting in two or three different areas.

The advantage of hunting over other forms of consumptive wildlife use is the high return of revenue for comparatively low off-takes. The recommended off-take from community areas in Zimbabwe is in the region of 4-5% as opposed to 10-20% from cropping.

### Potential returns from cropping

Only two areas were considered to have sufficient wildlife populations to justify a possible cropping operation: the Lake Mburo ecosystem and the Buruli complex. A financial analysis done on these two areas and summarized in Table 2 reveals that a landowner can receive income from cropping by selling the animals to an independent operator. Table 2 shows that cropping is a viable enterprise in the Lake Mburo ecosystem, though the estimated returns are half those expected by the landowner from hunting.

Table 2: Summary of potential returns from cropping in two areas (US\$)

Area	Gross Revenue	Net Revenue	Returns/km <sup>2</sup> in US\$
Lake Mburo	85,255	46,543	30
Buruli	33,240	-1,711	0

### Game Ranching

Ostrich and crocodile ranching were considered for analysis. There is one crocodile ranch in operation and no commercial ostrich ranches in Uganda. Data analyzed from a commercial crocodile ranch which produces 2000 skins per year and the Maasai Ostrich Farm in Kenya indicate a significant potential from these operations.

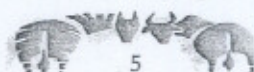
### Protected Forests and Forests Areas on Public Land

Increasing numbers of people worldwide are now showing interest in visiting tropical forests to see rare species. To capture this niche of the market, Uganda is well on its way to developing a viable forest based eco-tourism business. The Mgahinga Forest National Park and creation of Strict Nature Reserves (SNRs) are examples of efforts to boost eco-tourism.

## 5.1 Implications for the Uganda Wildlife Authority

The establishment of wildlife enterprises will contribute to the financial sustainability of the UWA through fees and taxes charged to various operations. However, for use rights that can influence land-use in favor of wildlife, such as hunting or farming, in order to provide an economic incentive to make land-use decisions that benefit wildlife, it might be appropriate for UWA to charge little or no application fees.

It is envisaged that UWA will be expected to play a key role in advising and supporting use right applicants, particularly those in community areas. This will undoubtedly incur costs for UWA in the short term. Another option is involving conservation NGOs in the use rights process. In Lake Mburo there is a Community



Conservation Program with NGO participation (African Wildlife Foundation). The area could be used as a pilot for the use rights program on the assumption that the community conservation program would be able to advise and monitor the effects of granting use rights outside protected areas.

## **6.0 Opportunities and constraints to wildlife enterprise development**

### **6.1 Wildlife tourism**

The tourism sector in Uganda has continued to register an average positive growth rate despite disruptions due to insecurity in the tourist regions of Kasese, Kabarole, and Bundibugyo districts and in the North. This growth rate is much higher than the global rate of 5.5% and 2.9% for 1996 and 1997, respectively.

#### **Constraints**

A major constraint is the tourism industry's marketing dependence on gorilla tourism where tourist numbers are limited to about 3000-4000 persons per annum. Other factors responsible for the poor performance include the:

- limited attempt by the private sector to focus on other markets,
- paucity of financial resources to undertake effective marketing;
- poor coordination of tourist product development work;
- availability of competitive alternatives.

An increased interest and willingness from operators outside Uganda to look at Uganda as a new destination has led to an increase in accommodation capacity in protected areas to about 20,000-25,000 beds in total.

Despite the potential of Uganda's tourism industry bouncing back, a number of factors that would drive its success are:

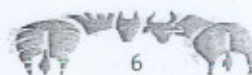
- Uganda is a difficult destination to sell to the general public following the civil wars in the 1970s' and 1980s'. Uganda cannot, for the foreseeable future, compete with other 'safari' destinations. The Uganda Tourist Board has been active in promoting Uganda as an international tourist destination in an attempt to counter this stigma.
- Tourism requires specific skills and expertise and there is a complicated link of intermediaries between the product and end-user. These areas have only recently been liberalized implying that skills have yet to be developed or transferred to the private sector.

### **6.3 Game ranching**

In Uganda, the restrictions of the hunting ban of 1979 outlaw game ranching and cropping which has restricted the growth of game ranching. The UWA is currently undertaking a study on the utilization of Impalas in the Lake Mburo National Park, which will provide information on the nutritive and commercial value and marketability of game meat in Uganda. Very limited experience on wildlife farming however exists in Uganda.

### **6.5 Fee-Paying Hunting**

Wildlife hunting is one of the Specific Wildlife Use Rights in the Wildlife Statute (1996). The Uganda Wildlife Authority is developing guidelines and regulations to provide a framework for the utilization of wildlife under this category of use rights. Emphasis is being given however, to ensure that hunting will provide adequate benefits to local communities, and that it is done in a manner that does not negatively affect international tourism.



## 7.0 Conclusion

Wildlife management in Uganda has until recently remained the exclusive responsibility of the Government. This management approach evolved with the promulgation of the 1996 Uganda Wildlife Statute which vests ownership of wildlife in the State but provides for any person to own any wildlife lawfully taken. Wildlife Statute of 1996 opened the wildlife sector to more popular public participation and private sector involvement. These views of the statute are complimented by a number of international legal instruments and commitments including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention, CITES, and the Forest Convention which advocate for popular participation and private sector involvement.

The scope for wildlife enterprise development in Uganda is wide. There is a broad potential for investment in both consumptive and non-consumptive uses. Apart from wildlife and nature tourism, there could be opportunities to exploit in ranching, hunting, farming, breeding programs, private or community wildlife sanctuary.

The national framework for the development and management of wildlife enterprises in Uganda has not yet been ratified. Few private sector initiatives in their own right have therefore developed the capacity to effectively participate in wildlife businesses. Support is therefore required in this area to improve performance within the sector. The creation of community organizations and the activities of UWA in the development of wildlife use rights will therefore significantly contribute to the development of the wildlife sector in Uganda.





# An Overview of Wildlife Enterprise Development in the Greater Virungas of Uganda and Rwanda.

By George Michael Sikoyo

## **2.1 Introduction**

The Greater Virungas have for the last 10-15 years been known for gorilla tourism, especially in Rwanda, and since 1992 in Uganda, where it has been the primary focus for the development of the tourism industry. Gorilla tourism is significant because of its considerable earnings to the national economies of the countries sharing the greater Virunga. However, it is a fragile activity, and the area faces a number of pressures including conflicting land use practices and political instability in addition to population pressure.

We explore the policy and enabling environment of wildlife enterprise development in each of the two countries. The focus is on the stakeholders, opportunities and constraints to enterprise development and we also look at the potential of developing the greater virungas as a regional tourist circuit.

## **2.2 An Overview of Wildlife Enterprise Development in Uganda**

### **2.2.1 The Legal Framework in Uganda**

Until 1996, the Government of Uganda retained centralized control over wildlife resources. The Wildlife Statute of 1996 opened the door to community and private sector participation in wildlife management. Today, individuals, communities, and businesses may petition the Executive Director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) to obtain wildlife user rights.

#### **Land Tenure in Uganda**

The Constitution (1995) and subsequently The Land Act of 1998 outline four systems of land tenure in Uganda.

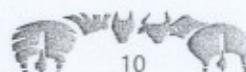
- Under customary tenure, local traditional regulations govern the ownership and use of land.
- Freehold tenure allows citizens, individuals, communities, businesses, etc to hold registered land for a fixed amount of time or in perpetuity.
- Mailo tenure involves permanent ownership or use of registered land, but ownership of developments and improvements on the land is separated from ownership of the land itself.
- Leasehold tenure grants of exclusive possession of land and land improvements by the landlord to a tenant in return for a rent or a premium or both.

None of these systems provide for the ownership of wildlife, but landholders may petition for wildlife use rights on the land they occupy. In addition, the Land Act allows associations to set aside areas of land for communal use and for purposes that include wildlife enterprises such as hunting. The Act further provides that any lease of public land to an Ugandan citizen may be converted to freehold status, thus facilitating wildlife enterprise activities.

Finally, the Land Act allows the acquisition of land by non-citizens on a leasehold basis for a period not exceeding 99 years. This section makes it possible for foreign individuals and companies to acquire land and develop wildlife enterprises in the security of a long lease period. Such undertakings could serve as models for the local entrepreneurs and also offer opportunities of community partnership with the private sector.

### **2.2.2 Stakeholders in Wildlife Enterprise Development in Uganda**

These include national government institutions, community-based institutions and the private sector. Various



bodies and organizations that are working together to promote tourism include the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Uganda Tourist Board (UTB), Uganda Investment Authority (UIA), Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) and the private sector companies.

### **Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism**

The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry ratified the Wildlife Policy of Uganda in 1995, which created the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). The policy advocates wider community involvement in wildlife conservation. The mission of the Uganda Wildlife Authority is to:

“conserve in perpetuity the resources within the National Parks and other wildlife areas to enable the people and the global community to derive ecological, economic, aesthetic and educational benefits from wildlife”.

The provision for a range of wildlife use rights in the Wildlife Statute is an important factor to the development of wildlife based business ventures in Uganda.

### **Uganda Tourist Board**

A parastatal of the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry, the Uganda Tourist Board is responsible for marketing the country as a tourist destination. In addition, UTB is currently collaborating with Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) in diversifying the tourism product. It is focusing on new areas like birding and nature walks. The efforts of the Board are well appreciated by members of the Uganda Tour Operators Association. The Board is also supportive of the participation of the local community and individuals at the grassroots level in the development of tourism.

UTB now realizes the need for capacity at grassroots level. It is currently collaborating with the Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) to encourage local stakeholder participation in supporting community in the development of enterprise skills like book- and record-keeping, catering, hospitality and hygiene.

Some of the limitations to the operations and effectiveness of the UTB include:

- Budgetary constraints; since the Board is entirely dependent on donors like the European Union, its operations are limited by a tight budget.
- Understaffing. UTB is in need of a greater capacity of manpower to run its operations effectively.

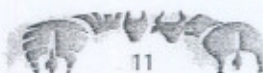
### **Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA)**

The Uganda Community Tourism Association was established as an umbrella organization representing community eco-tourism and handicraft enterprises in Uganda. Its objective is to empower local communities in sustainable development enabling them to plan, manage and develop their own initiative. The tool for these small-scale and handicraft enterprises is eco-tourism.

Training is a key element to a successful development strategy. Introducing the community to the elements of eco-tourism; its impacts both positive and negative, needs of the tourist industry and provide overall support and assistance to community initiatives in exploiting this profitable industry.

UCOTA's training objectives can be summarized as:

- Building the capacity of local community members to effectively manage and operate their tourism businesses.



- Enhancing the economic viability of the campground/rest camp businesses.
- Increasing benefits to local communities from the Eco-tourism program in BINP and MGNP.
- Developing the 'customer skills' of park staff within specific areas - visitor handling, communications, and tour guiding techniques.

### **Private Tour Operators**

Private tour companies target the upper end of the tourist market, and are organized under the Uganda Tourists Association (UTA), which also covers related stakeholders such as airlines, hotels and catering industry and training institutions in the country. UTA monitors changes in tax policies and their impact on the tourism industry. It also pressures government to provide incentives for the tourism industry.

### **Uganda Investment Authority (UIA)**

UIA is a regulatory body in the country charged with the responsibility of attracting and coordinating investments in all aspects of the economy. UIA works in collaboration with UWA (Uganda Wildlife Authority), UTA (Uganda Tourist Association), UTB (Uganda Tourist Board) and MITT (Ministry of Trade and Tourism Industry) and does provide on-going basic information and insight on tourism for prospective investors in the sector.

Some of the efforts by this institution to promote investments in tourism are:

- All vehicles used in any tourism initiative are free from paying duty and taxes.
- All other necessary equipment needed for this industry may be imported free of duty with a minimum tax of 4% for bedding and cutlery.

### **2.2.3 Constraints to Enterprise Development**

Uganda has far to go to achieve its potential as a tourist destination. From 11,444 visitors to parks and forests in 1980, the number increased to 84,052 in 1996. But tourist visitations plummeted to 32,819, following the massacre of tourists at Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in 1999. Another drop likely occurred in the year 2000 following the Kanungu cult murders.

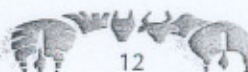
In addition to insecurity and perceived insecurity, a major constraint to Uganda's tourism industry is its ongoing marketing dependence on gorilla tourism. This sector is limited to receiving a maximum of visitors of 3,000-4,000 clients per annum.

Other factors responsible for the under-performing in the tourism industry include:

- A lack of effective international marketing, initiatives such as internet advertising, creation of websites and promotional campaigns.
- High interest rates of about 28% and a generally unfavorable business environment make investment in the tourism sector unattractive for the private sector investment.
- The private sector has made only limited attempts to diversify the tourist market.
- Particularly in more remote parks, basic infrastructure—roads, water, electricity and communication facilities are unreliable or completely absent.
- Accommodation facilities outside of Kampala are still not adequate to attract top-end tourists at the top-end of the market.

### **2.2.4 Opportunities for Further Enterprise Development**

Although Uganda faces stiff competition from other African countries, including South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Mauritius and the Seychelles, the country has the potential to develop its own comparative advantage in



avi-fauna and community tourism. In fact, over the last two years, accommodation capacity has risen by 25,000 beds annually in these new niches, and there is great potential for expansion.

Possible solutions to the limitations outlined above include:

- Further diversity. The sector needs to diversify beyond the current heavy dependence on mountain gorilla trekking. In addition to birding and community tourism, proposals include sport fishing, rafting, historical/ritual sites, nature and scenery walks.
- A more active government effort to end rebellions in the north and western parts of the country could help allay tourists fears.
- Tax regimes and policy need to be re-examined. Currently exporters in other sectors of the economy are not taxed as heavily as the tourism industry. Tourism, an earner of foreign exchange, could be considered an export industry for tax purposes.

Uganda's potential to enhance the tourist industry depends on the following factors:

- Forming the necessary partnerships and linkages. These are required to finance, manage and market the tourism product. Tourism requires specific skills and expertise and there is a complicated link of intermediaries between the product and end-user. The tourism industry in Uganda in the past was dominated by public sector involvement with the Uganda Tourism Development Corporation (UTDC) undertaking most of the hotel and tour operators businesses. These sectors have only recently been privatized implying that skills have yet to be developed or transferred to the private sector.
- Improving capacity for establishing, marketing and managing enterprises. The Uganda Tourism Board currently supports the 65 member Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) to establish quality standards, and diversify tourism products. UCOTA needs to standardize community tourism as its own product separate from the traditional wildlife safaris and gorilla tourism. This would require support from the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry.

## **2.3 An Overview of Wildlife Enterprise Development in Rwanda**

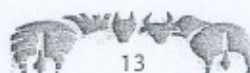
### **2.3.1 Introduction**

Because of Rwanda's high population and demand for more agricultural land, there is need to develop an effective conservation strategy to promote gorilla tourism as a profitable alternative to agriculture.

Currently Rwanda has preserved 10% of its land area to National Parks. This is an impressive effort on behalf of the state given that the population pressure exceeds 256 people/km<sup>2</sup> and that 95% of the population is predominantly involved in intensive subsistence agriculture of rural areas.

The population has doubled in the last 25 years despite wars and political instability— creating even greater pressure on land resources. Most citizens livelihood depends on subsistence farming of sorghum, bananas, cassava and sweet potatoes on plots of 1-2 ha, 75% of which are on steep hillsides.

As in Uganda, gorilla tourism is the single most important asset over which Rwanda has an absolute comparative advantage when compared to Kenya and Tanzania. Understandably, gorilla tourism has been the primary focus for the development of the tourism industry in the country. It has the potential to bring in considerable funds to the national economy, with the associated multiplier effects on local and regional economies. As with Uganda, this particular form of tourism is however, very fragile. Given the pressure on land and the political instability along the country's borders, there has been little incentive for the private sector to invest in tourism.



## 2.3.2 Policy and Legal Framework

In recognition of the importance of tourism in Rwanda, the government in 1990 put in place a ten-year strategic plan. However, given the effects of the civil war and the general collapse of security within the country, tourism completely collapsed in the last decade.

A successful revamping of the tourist industry will involve not only private sector efforts but also government support in all areas, from infrastructural development, to enhancing political stability and capacity building of the people themselves.

Tourism could become Rwanda's second foreign exchange earner after coffee, in addition to creating jobs. Tourism develops strong linkages to other sectors of the economy including agriculture, transport, communications, and to some extent the manufacturing industry.

Table 1 below indicates the government plan, which is aimed at reviving the tourism sector.

**Table 1 Strategies for reviving the tourism sector in Rwanda**

Strategic Orientation	Types of Action	Product Development.	Evaluate the current tourist potential.
Define the different possibilities and combinations.	Put into place complementary products.	Develop internal tourism potential.	Aggressive Marketing.
Eliminate Bureaucracy	Develop Hospitality Culture.	Select exclusive high-market clients.	Create the necessary high profile-exposure.
Organize marketing campaign abroad by professional tour companies.	Disengage the control of hotels from ORTPN.	Reorganize the structure of ORTPN.	Establish funds to promote the tourism sector.
Awareness campaign for the local population on the importance of tourism.	Train and boost capacity building in the tourism sector.	Coordinate private tour operators into a committee and an organizational structure.	

As a matter of policy, the Government of Rwanda favors ecotourism. This policy distinguishes Rwanda from its other East African neighbors, Kenya and Tanzania, who practice mass tourism, even though the latter's strategy is shifting to small, high-end tourism recently.

The overall importance of the tourism potential can be underlined by the revenue generated in 1996 amounting to \$10 million. Allowing the private sector to play a more proactive role in the tourism industry can quickly move Rwanda into a destination for exclusive, high-end tourism. Tour companies such as Alliance Express are promoting the country's potential for upscale tourism but have so far received little support from the government to facilitate and endorse the campaign.

## 2.3.3 Role of the Stakeholders in the Tourism Industry

The official parastatal institution coordinating and promoting the tourist industry is ORTPN (Office Rwandaise de Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux). In the past few years, however, there has been little initiative taken by this.

**ORTPN (Office Rwandaise de Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux)** organization in reviving the tourism industry in the country and very little support offered to the private sector tour operators and agencies operating in the Parks. ORTPN is long due to be re-organized and strengthened so as to be able to play a greater facilitating role in revamping the tourism sector and collaborate with the private sector tour agencies on the infrastructural needs. A new director, appointed in early 2001, expresses great interest in reviving the organization.

There is a need for a massive marketing campaign attack to:

- Promote the country as a safe tourist destination-offering top of the line exclusivity.
- Diversify into new and competitive range of activities with regard to exclusive opportunities in Gorillas and other activities such as mountain hiking and cultural tourism.
- Coordinate with the private sector to re-launch the tourism industry.
- Improve the country's infrastructure to accommodate functional tourist facilities.
- Lower taxes by government on imports, provide low interests loans and educate the public on the importance of tourism.
- Review the gorilla tourism tariff structure, with a view to increasing benefits accruing to ORTPN and the local communities;
- Promote more interaction with local communities while avoiding any adverse social impacts, so as to encourage tourists to stay longer and spend more in the communities;
- Promote the availability of information and educational materials at tourists' point of departure;
- Design, pre-test, and annually administer tourist survey questionnaires in all wildlife protected areas and other areas of tourism interest so as to allow for calculations of net economic impacts.

Allowing the private sector to take up some of the state-run facilities such as hotels (40% of hotels are run by ORTPN) might also be an improvement.

### **Private Sector Tour Operators**

Whereas there is a substantial number of tour operators active in the tourism industry, only three of these were investigated during the study. These include:

- Mille Collines Hotel
- Alliance Express
- Chez Lando Hotel

Alliance Express is one of the most pro-active stakeholders in the tourist industry. Through this organization's initiative, Rwanda joined the World Travel Market in November. With more governmental support to this initiative Rwanda's presence as a tourist destination would be much greater. The private sector could help diversify Rwanda's tourism as being more than just a place where gorillas live to a destination that is part of the overall circuit including Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

However, the private sector should be given the ability to make decisions in order to set up the appropriate channels for tourism industry. In these 'initial rebuilding stages' there is need for the private sector not to be encumbered with bureaucratic legislation and complicated policy procedures.

### **2.3.4 Conclusion**

The government's role rests in taking the initiative in promoting Rwanda for tourism taking on the private sector as a partner to bring tourism back into the country. There is need to work towards creating an enabling environment, marketing, and building up of the infrastructure for tourism.



## **2.4 Developing the Greater Virungas as a Regional Tourist Circuit.**

Many tourism operators including Gorilla Land Safaris Ltd., African Pearl Safaris Ltd. and Volcano Safaris Ltd. in Uganda and Mille Collines Hotel, Alliance Express and Chez Lando Hotel in Rwanda stress the great potential for a tourist circuit in the greater Virungas. The success of such a circuit depends in part on harmonized regional policy and legal frameworks.

A coordinated, regional strategy would require various players in the government and tourism industry to:

- Coordinate the administration of the four national parks, thus pooling together a common conservation program across the three borders.
- Diversify the tourism product and reduce dependence on the mountain gorilla.
- Develop one marketing strategy, including centralizing bookings for the four parks.
- Develop infrastructure and communication facilities across the region.
- Facilitate the socio-economic development of the surrounding local communities.

The potential of the Greater Virungas as a tourist circuit will depend in large part on regional political stability. In addition, it will depend on government willingness to encourage both private sector and community participation as well as to coordinate conservation and tourism policies among the three countries.



# An Analysis of Wildlife Enterprises in the Virungas

By George Michael Sikoyo

### 3.1 Introduction

The land surrounding the national parks of the Greater Virungas is heavily populated. The parks future depends on clear benefits coming to local communities.

A number of community-based enterprises such as campgrounds have been initiated around Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and Mgahinga National Park. The Buhoma Community Rest Camp was initiated by John Dubois with financial support worth 9 million Uganda Shillings from the Peace Corps Small Projects Assistance (UASID) in 1993. The rest camp is a 100% owned and operated by the local community; registered as Buhoma Community Development Association.

Amajembere Iwachu Community Campground was conceived by some members within Gisozi Parish who wanted to replicate the Buhoma Community Rest Camp model. Subsequent financial support has come from the American Peace Corps and Mgahinga Bwindi Trust Fund (MBTF).

Another community initiative is the Bushara Island Community Campground located in Lake Bunyonyi, about 17Km from Kabale town. This Camp is located to cater the tourists on their way to and from BINP and MNP.

In Rwanda, an initiative at Kinyigi to start a tourist hostel by an association of widows was looked into.

The impact of these three community enterprises forms the focus of the rest of this study ( See Fig 1 for location of the enterprises investigated).

### 3.2 Wildlife Enterprises Investigated on the Ugandan side of the Virungas

#### 3.2.1 Buhoma Community Rest Camp

The Buhoma Rest Camp is located near the headquarters of BINP in southwestern Uganda. As at other wildlife-based enterprises in Uganda, visitation rates have been erratic, due primarily to the security situation. Table 2 shows the number of visitors that the Rest camp has received since 1995.

**Table 2: Number of visitors to Buhoma Community Rest Camp**

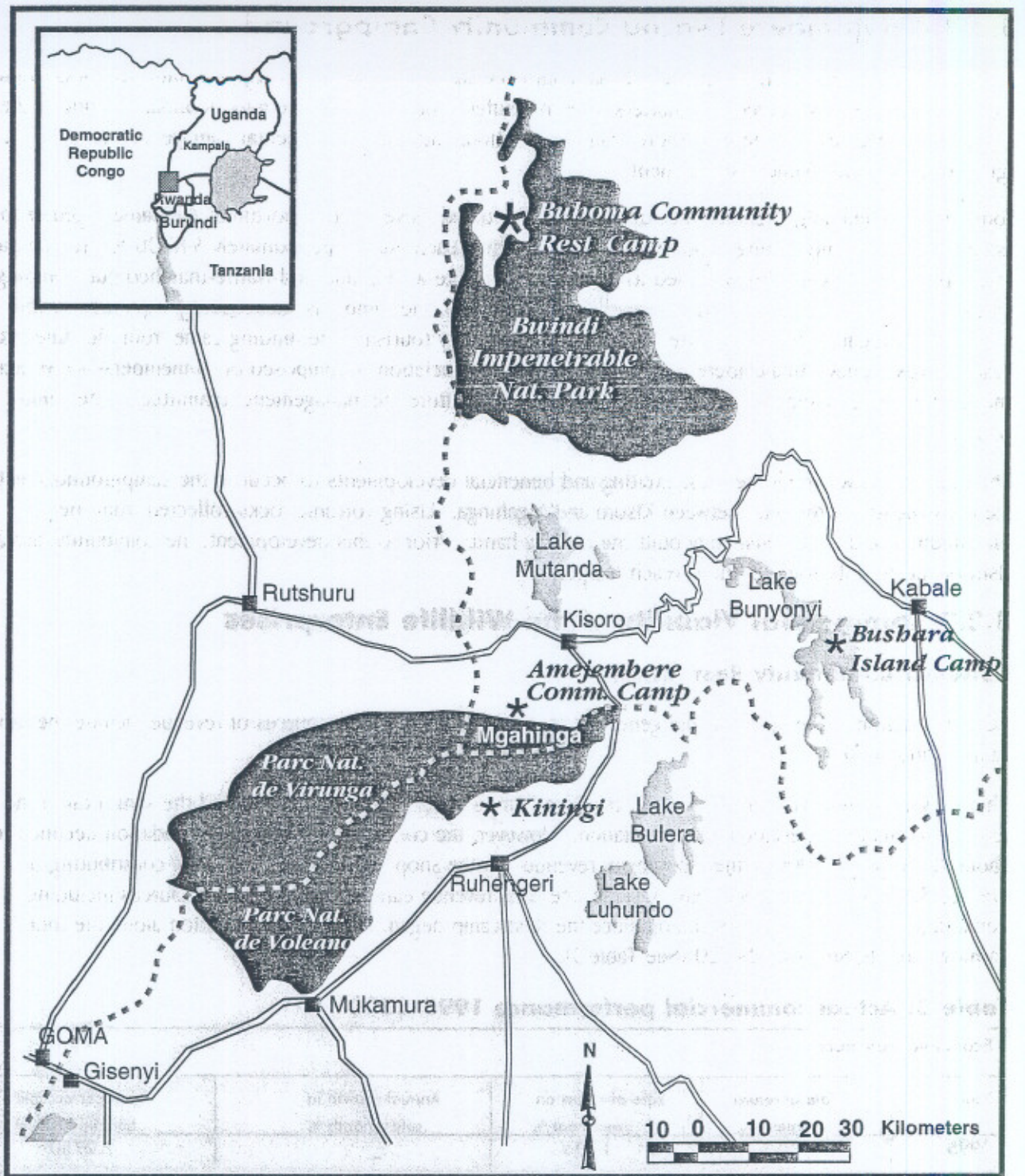
Year	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Total
1995	0	421	411	563	1395
1996	434	394	560	560	1948
1997	551	553	1372	502	2978
1998	305	399	686	493	1883
1999	272	183	307	259	1021
2000	326	550	876		
Total	1888	2500	3336	2377	10101

Source : Buhoma Rest Camp records (2000)

Visitors to the Camp to date total approximately ten thousand, with an annual average of about 1680 guests.



**Figure 1: Location of Buhoma Community Rest Camp, Amajembere Iwachu Campground and Bushara Island Camp**



- \* Enterprise
- ==== Major Roads
- Rivers
- International Boundary
- Towns
- Conservation Area
- Lakes

This figure could be much higher had it not been for the case of the Bwindi massacre that occurred in March 1999. Most of the guests to the camp come between the months of April and August.

### 3.2.2 Amajambere Iwachu Community Campground

In the early 1990s when Mgahinga Gorilla National Park was formed, the then Uganda National Parks evicted local communities considered as squatters from the buffer zone to protect the park boundary. Many of these communities had resided there for more than a generation, and the environmental damage caused by agricultural encroachment is still evident.

Some of the community members decided to view the forced move as an opportunity and came together to establish a community campground. Initially, 27 members each put in approximately \$40.00 to provide the first capital investment. This was used to develop a small site with a mud-and-wattle-thatched hut, camping space for four tents, a latrine and an eco-shower. From 1996, the camp has subsequently expanded to four brick accommodation units on a site set aside for community tourism. The funding came from the American Peace Corps. Today, Amajambere Iwachu Development Association is composed of 35 members—9 women and 26 men. Five members, two of whom are women, constitute the management committee of the campground.

The year 1994 saw one of the most exciting and beneficial developments to occur in the campground's history: the construction of the road between Kisoro and Mgahinga. Using volcanic rocks collected from the surrounding fields, the community built the road by hand. Prior to this development, the community and all visitors had to walk some 8 Km to reach the park.

### 3.2.3 Commercial Viability of the Wildlife Enterprises

#### Buhoma Community Rest Camp

Accommodation is the main income generator at the Rest Camp. Other sources of revenue include the food canteen and shop.

The analysis shows that from 1995-1996, the Rest Camp's accommodation contributed the sum total of the revenue to Buhoma Development Association. However, the contribution from accommodation declined to about 22 % by July 2000. Other sources of revenue like the shop and food canteen were contributing on average 8.5% and 23%, respectively. To-date, the total revenue earned from the above sources including donations is about Ug.Shs 218 million since the Rest camp began. From accommodation alone the total earnings are Ug.Shs 102,724,520 (See Table 3).

**Table 3: Actual commercial performance 1995-2000**

Economic indicators				
Year	Rate of return on sales %	Rate of return on investment %	Annual growth in sales/month %	Profit per occupied bednight (US\$)
1995	20	18.3	-	2730
1996	-100	-107	-0.8	-10,399
1997	31.5	31.5	6.7	3,604
1998	67.5	50	9.15	25,643
1999	71.9	55	-3.7	28,269
2000	79	62	-1.5	29,864
Average in 6 years	45	28	10.0	9,660

Note: 1995-2000 data is taken from unaudited accounts to July 2000

As shown in Table 3 above, the return on sales (ROS) in 1995 increased from 20% to 79% by July 2000 the time of this investigation. The overall average for the six years the Rest Camp has been in existence is 45%, which is well within the industry benchmark of 20-50% for such business subject to risk.

Return on investment (ROI) increased from 18% in 1995 to 62% by July 2000 except for 1996 when it was -107%. The average ROI in the six years is about 28%, which is within the industry benchmark of 10-30% despite the high levels of state taxation from Cash Transaction Levy (CTL) and VAT.

Generally, the Rest Camp has performed well since its inception. A number of factors have contributed to this performance. These include the standby permits, which used to be taken advantage of by visitors who had not made bookings. The extra day(s) spent in the campsite implied more expenditure from guests for accommodation, food and drinks, thus resulting in more revenue accruing to the Rest Camp. Unfortunately, the standby permits were withdrawn in 1998.

The Rest camp needs to develop a competitive edge to be able to compete with private safari agencies. There is need to improve the standards of the accommodation units and quality of services offered from the kitchen to attract more tourists. Other helpful actions would include restoring standby permits, as well as diversifying tourism activities to include village walks, cultural tourism, and birding. This will help the communities link benefits with conservation and feel the trickle down effect to the local economy.

### **Amajambere Iwachu campground**

As opposed to the two examples above, the main source of income at the Amajambere Iwachu campground is the contribution from the 35 members, amounting to Ug.Shs 735,000 a year. Donor contributions came from USAID Peace Corps small grants program equivalent to Ug.Shs, 10 million in 1997, which was used for the expansion of the campground and another Ug.Shs 1.5 million, which came from the Mgahinga, Bwindi Forest Trust Fund (MBFT) and was used to construct the water tank.

Since its inception the total amount of revenue that has accrued to the camp is about Ug.Shs 36.7 million (see Table 4). The return on sales has been increased from 14% in 1995 to 37% by July 2000, making the overall ROS 40% well within the industry benchmark of 30-50% for such enterprises. The return on sales is about 22.9% and is within the industry benchmark of 10-30% for such enterprises. The campground is commercially viable and covers its own operational costs. However, the local community's capacity through training is necessary in hospitality, catering, marketing, business (record and book keeping) and management skills.

**Table 4: Summary of Profit and Loss Account of Amajambere Iwachu Community Campground**

Economic indicators				
Year	Rate of return on sales %	Rate of return on investment %	Annual growth in sales/month %	Profit per occupied bednight (US\$)
1995	14	-3.0	8.3	418.90
1996	72	55.1	4.3	2164
1997	42	24.6	13.2	1249
1998	43	26.3	-42.5	1298
1999	-8	-25.5	1.5	-284
2000	37	20.0	-1.5	1109
Average	40	22.9	10.0	1196

Note: 1995-2000 data is taken from unaudited accounts to July 2000

### 3.2.4 Stakeholder Analysis

A wide variety of groups are stakeholders in the Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground. These groups are outlined in Table 5.

**Table 5: Stakeholder groups within Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground**

Stakeholder group	Active participants	Non-participants
Members from Buhoma parish	Women's groups, youth, disadvantaged groups, scouts, orphans, wildlife clubs in schools and religious groups	
Neighbors		Adjacent parishes not benefiting from the Rest Camp
External institutions	Uganda Wildlife Authority, Bwindi Impenetrable national park, IGCP, CARE, ITFC, UCOTA	Influencing institutions e.g. the Sub county local government.

Source: PALI (2000)

#### 3.2.4.1 The Wider Community

##### Buhoma Community Rest camp

A 20-member council, 10 of who are elected from the community, represents the interests of the wider community of Mukono Parish at Buhoma Rest Camp.

The role of the council is to plan for the activities of the Rest Camp, control funds, raise awareness in the community based on the need for partnership with park management authorities, steer livelihood initiatives like hygiene, and develop funding proposals for potential donors. The council currently suffers from internal weaknesses such as lack of managerial skills, rejection or slow adoption of new ideas, skewed decision-making process and lack of transparency.

##### Amajembere Iwachu campground

The interests of the wider community of Gisozi parish are represented in Amajembere Iwachu by a 35-member council: These are the key stakeholders to the campground and it consists of 35 members of which 9 and 26 are women and men, respectively. Decisions are reached when 75% of the members agree to it. The council has by-laws governing the management, membership, benefits distribution, accountability, and projects to be funded.

The main reason the Campground was established is to benefit the wider community living adjacent to the Mgahinga National Park and improve livelihoods, while at the same time reducing encroachment on the resource base. In 1992, when the Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the communities living around the newly gazetted park, cultivation and grazing of cattle were prohibited.



Compensation was paid to those who registered for it, but there has been resentment against the park for the following reasons:

- Access is denied to resources such as water, grazing and arable land.
- Access is denied to non-timber forest (and wetland) products such as medicinal plants, fibrous grasses
- for mat making, bee-keeping sites and honey, building material such as bamboo, thatch and fuel wood.
- Access is denied to culturally important sites within the national park.
- Buffalo damage crops.

### **3.2.4.2 Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA)**

Uganda Wildlife Authority is a key stakeholder to both in the Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu community campground. It holds the jurisdiction over BINP and MNP.

#### **Buhoma Community Rest camp**

UWA is part of the advisory committee to the Rest Camp management council. UWA allowed the camp to be close to the park headquarters thus opening better clientele opportunities for the campground. The Rest Camp often accommodates BINP visitors in addition to provision of food and beverages. Other benefits of UWA to the Rest camp include:

- Encouragement of the community to plant trees and establishment of fish ponds, rear goats and sheep as an alternative to park resources.
- Provide transport to Rest camp personnel and the wider community of Buhoma; especially the sick in need for hospitalization.
- Provide communication facilities as well as secretarial services to management of the Rest camp.
- Direct and provide information on reservations to tourists coming to the campground.
- Marketing of the camp including printing of brochures.

#### **Amajembere Iwachu community campground**

UWA perception of Amajembere Iwachu as a non-profit NGO was to benefit the local communities living adjacent to the MNP. UWA allowed four accommodation units to be constructed to accommodate all the guests coming to the park. A good relationship between the community campground and the park management authorities has since developed. Communities especially benefit from the security provided by the park authorities and in appreciation of the working relationship, the two parties exchange gifts at every end of year.

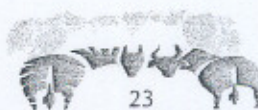
### **3.2.4.3 The Women s Club**

The Rest Camp supports the Women Club with eight different groups. For example, a piece of land worth Shs 0.4 million was purchased for the women club to build a "common group house". Subsequently, another piece of land worth Shs 1.2 million was bought. The land will enclose a shelter for a grinding mill to be established through the support of UCOTA.

For additional income, the women club-make baskets and perform traditional dances for tourists. For example in 1997 Ug.Shs 3 million accrued from basket and craft making. UCOTA is credited for initially uniting the eight women clubs and for training them by bringing in specialists to improve the quality of the basket and craft made. Each of the eight groups has a leader who trains others within the group.

The women's perception of the Rest camp, in light of the advantages or benefits they derive from it, include:

- Relief from contribution towards community projects.
- Linkage between current benefits derived from the Rest camp and conservation of the forest is clearly understood.



- Social cohesiveness is being enhanced through the working groups.

In 1998, the Amajembere community development association expanded to include handicrafts, drama and dance in the form of the Turambe Women's Group. Representatives for both ecotourism and handicrafts attended the community tourism development workshop in 1998, at which the Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA) was formed.

#### **3.2.4.4 Other Stakeholder groups to Buhoma and Mgahinga national parks**

Other major stakeholder groups include:

- CARE International, heavily in community development and environmental initiatives.
- Mgahinga Bwindi Conservation Trust Fund (MBFCT)

The MBFCT operates in both national parks where it is involved in establishing a number of public goods and services like schools and a health center. For example in Amajembere Iwachu, MBFCT contributed Ug.Shs 1.5 million towards the construction of a water tank in addition to supporting the wider community in the parish.

#### **The Institute for Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC)**

Its main activity is ecological monitoring and research around BINP. ITFC owns the land on which the Rest Camp is built. The Rest Camp is built on rented land (approx. 5 acres) from ITFC. No specific time frame is specified in the lease agreement.

#### **International Gorilla Conservation Program (IGCP)**

The International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) is a joint program of the African Wildlife Foundation, Fauna and Flora International, and WWF. IGCP provides technical, scientific and financial support to the region's national parks as well as local communities.

### **3.2.5 Financial Impact of Wildlife Enterprises on Local Residents**

#### **Buhoma Community Rest Camp**

At the time of this investigation six people were fully employed in the Rest camp full-time and one part-time. From 1995 to July 2000, they earned a total of Ug.Shs 26.8 million including wages and rations—about 13.5% of total income earned to date. This represents an average of Ug.Shs 372, 200 per worker per year, or Ug. Shs. 31,000 per month. There has been an upward trend in the earnings of the workers of the Rest camp since 1994 (See Table 6 below).

Since the establishment of the Camp, only Ug.Shs 11,280,450 as collective income has been spent on community projects e.g. contribution towards the Buhoma Women's Club, Kanyashande primary school and Rubona and Mukono Catholic and Anglican primary schools, respectively (See Table 7). This amount is about 5.2% of the total earnings of the Rest Camp in the 6-year period.



**Table 6: Earnings per year for employees at Buhoma Rest Camp, Uganda Shillings**

Category of worker	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Manager	650,000	820,000	880,000	1,344,000	1,344,000	860,000	5,898,000
Accountant			140,000	966,000	966,000	642,000	2714000
Chef				579,000	579,000	441,000	1599000
Head attendant	336,000	435,000	454,000	579,000	579,000	481,000	2,864,000
Assistant Attendant				552,000	552,000		1104000
Attendants (3)	864,000	1,227,000	1,140,000	1,573,200	1,573,000		6,377,200
Part-time treasurer	240,000	295,000	300,000	582,000	582,000	300,250	2,299,250
Night watchman			392,000	552,000	552,000	370,000	1866000
Driver				720,000	720,000	300,000	1740000
Turnboy				360,000			360000

Source: Buhoma Community Rest Camp (2000)

**Table 7: Distribution of collective income into Development Projects**

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
Buhoma Womens Group		147,950	2,500			150,450
Kanyashande P/School		2,244,600	2,932,800		710,400	5,887,800
Rubona church school	27,000	1,370,100	105,000	234,200	77,400	1,813,700
Mukono church school			784,600	1,038,900	5,000	1828500

Source: Buhoma Community Rest Camp (2000)

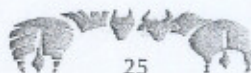
### **Amajembere lwachu community campground**

The campground employs few people, but members benefit from dividends, and the community as whole benefits from collective income from the enterprise.

Six people employed in the campground earned approximately Ug.Shs. 4.9 million as direct cash earnings. This is approximately about 22% of total expenditure and is on average Ug.Shs 11,000/= per worker per month, or Ug.Shs 132,000/= per year.

To date the 35 members have each received a total of Ug.Shs 252,000/= as dividends. And by March 1997, their shares were worth about Ug.Shs 12 million, or a dividend of about Ug.Shs 352,000/ each.

Since the campground began operation, a total of about Ug.Shs 1.4 million as collective income has been channeled to social economic development projects within Gisozi parish. Three schools have been supported and these include the Adventist church, Kiszosi and Kikugu primary schools.



### **3.2.5.1 Overview of Financial Impacts of the Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Community Campground**

The Rest Camp has generated a total of Ug.Shs 218.2 million, or about Ug.Shs 3,257,800/= per month, since it was established in 1995. Of this about 13.5% accrues to the workers in the Rest Camp as salaries and wages. In terms of the amount earned by the workers, these earnings are very significant. They are comparable to a monthly household income of Ug.Shs 35,187 estimated for southwestern Uganda (Ministry of Planning 1991). However, the long-term sustainability of this income is dependent on the security and political stability in the region.

The Campground has generated a total of Ug.Shs 37.5million, or about Ug.Shs 6.25 million per year, since it became operational in 1995. Of this about 12.8% accrues to the workers in the Campground as wages. In terms of the amount earned by the workers, these earnings are not very significant. They are not comparable to a monthly household income of Ug.Shs 35,187 estimated for southwestern Uganda (Ministry of Planning 1991).

### **3.2.6 Livelihood Impacts of Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground**

To the wider community of Buhoma and Gisozi parishes, the Rest camp and Iwachu campground respectively, have contributed towards social development projects like schools and support to the orphans. In addition, non-tangible benefits include the generated social cohesiveness of the members, annual festivities and the different associations formed. This is a boost to community spirit and could be attributed to the enterprise or campground. For example: To the women's stakeholder group, the spin-off effects of the Rest Camp and campground have precipitated the development of the handicraft and basketry in the community. Furthermore, both enterprises have created employment opportunities in addition to capacity building in tourism and awareness raising on the value of wildlife resources. Specific impact of the Buhoma community rest camp includes demonstration impact on other communities e.g. Amajembere Iwachu community campground.

Both enterprises have perceived negative impacts which include cultural incompatibility, limited job opportunities, and few direct benefits to individual households. The negative impacts specific to each enterprise include:

- Amajembere Iwachu community campground: There is resentment over limited distribution benefits and alleged embezzlement of funds by the village elite.
- The Rest camp: More than a quarter of communal earnings to date are unaccounted for.

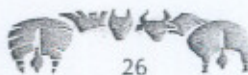
### **3.2.7 Conservation Impact of Buhoma Rest Camp and Amajembere Iwachu Campground**

The conservation impact of each enterprise analyzed is not clear. Some benefit are accruing, but outside the direct beneficiaries, many appear to believe costs (of lack of access to forest products, crop raiding, etc) still exceed benefits of living close to protected areas

## **3.3 The Bushara Island Camp**

### **3.3.1 Introduction**

The Bushara island camp is located on Bushara Island in Lake Bunyonyi and is about 17 Km from Kabale Town in Kabale District, south Western Uganda. The Island is owned by Church of Uganda (COU) and leased by the Bushara Island Development Company which runs it on behalf of the local community. The campground was



initiated in 1994 with only two "double-bedroom" tents. Since then, the campground has expanded with an additional six tents. Support to the Camp has come from the Canadian Consulate. A sum of Shs12 million was spent on purchasing a transport boat and the necessary radio equipment to communicate with the mainland office. To-date the investments carried out in the Camp include:

- Building of the reception and visitor center.
- Polishing up and improvement of services provided.
- Development of marketing material, professional training and improving the signage within the camp to make a difference.
- Equipping the campground with five tents and a canteen.

The Canadian managers provide the expertise, acting primarily as consultants to training staff with the appropriate skills in book-keeping, marketing, handling bookings and customer relations. A rotational system of casual laborers and permanent staff has been established to minimize costs over the low season. Since 1998, community participation in running the Camp ground has increased from 20% to between 70% and 80%.

The Board of Directors, which manages the company, is composed of 6 members. Currently this board needs to be re-designed to include members of the local community. Negotiations are also currently going on so that the Development Company acquires NGO status, which would be useful in applying for a longer-term lease from the Church of Uganda and give it a certain degree of independence.

### **3.3.2 Commercial Viability**

The Bushara Island camp has held a monopoly over the tourism industry in Lake Bunyonyi. Overall there has been general increase of tourism in the area in recent years, with 80% of the guests being regional or domestic tourists.

The Island is currently operating at the break-even point. Management anticipates that an enterprise like Bushara Island camp should be able to compete with other enterprises within a span of about 2.5 years. The occupancy rate currently stands at 70-80% compared to 40-50% the year after the Bwindi massacre.

To date, total revenue to the campground from its launch is Ug.Shs 218 million. Between 1994-1996, the gross revenue each year was Shs 27 million. From 1997, total revenue increased to Shs 34 million, except for 1998 when it dropped to Shs 29 million due to the Bwindi massacre in March 1999. In the year 2000, earnings are expected to peak at Shs 40 million. Approximately 35% of the gross revenue earned is spent on wages.

Marketing is still underdeveloped, relying virtually exclusively on word of mouth until recently. So far about Ug.Shs 45 million has been spent on promotion. A Web page has been created for the Camp and will be in the Canadian site for better exposure. A fully functional e-mail service is due to start in 2001.

Currently the marketing focus is on pricing policies in addition to salesmanship and packaging strategies.

### **3.3.3 Direct Financial Impact on Local Communities**

#### **Salaries and wages**

The camp employs 35 people. Each year the campground trains eight people in the appropriate skills. To-date, the Bushara Island camp has generated about Ug.Shs 218 million, or about Ug.Shs 36 million per year, since it became operational in 1995. Of this about 29-35% (approximately Ug.Shs 63.2-76.3 million) has been paid to the workers in the camp as wages.

## **Collective Income**

Collective income with respect to the Bushara Island camp refers to the income that goes to support other community projects. These projects include a grinding machine and the orphanage. Orphans are also being supported in schools; Ug. Shs 15 million is being spent annually. Other wider community projects the camp supports include the agro-forestry project (see below), whose benefits will be seen in the long term.

### **3.3.4 Livelihood Impacts**

Some of the benefits of the camp include access to the grinding mill, and support to the orphans. Neighbors have also benefited through employment.

#### **Agro-Forestry Project**

Agro-forestry was initiated in 1993 and the nursery is located on a separate island owned by the church. The agro-forestry project was initiated because of the declining soil fertility within Lake Bunyoni Islands. Given the need for improvement of fallow systems and to address the escalating problem of soil erosion. Estimates have shown that in each rainfall season, an average of 10 tons of soil are washed away. Raising awareness of the escalating problem of soil erosion on agricultural plots is the principal purpose of the project.

Payoffs of the agro-forestry project are expected to include improved soil fertility, erosion control, and production of fodder and fruit.

#### **Credit scheme**

A cooperative society has been formed to serve workers employed in the agro-forestry, boating, and restaurant sections of the camp. Each makes a contribution to the fund. Capital borrowed from the fund is then returned without interest.

#### **Dancers**

There are two groups of fifteen people each. The dancers come from the villages of Kyabahinga and Mukono, and began performing in May 2000. One dance performance costs Shs 20,000. Money earned is spent on books and other school needs; household needs, and uniforms for dancing.

#### **Dress-making**

The dress-making unit was two months old at the time of this study. No sales had been recorded, but the enterprise already had one shop in Kampala and another within the community campground. Three people are employed in this unit.

#### **Transport**

A number of boats operate on the island. However, Attempts were made to look into those that ferry customers to the Island camp. The campsites supports three different boating companies that hire out boats to clients going to the islands.

### **3.3.5 Conservation Impact**

Community conservation incentives such as recognition have boosted community willingness to adopt new

agro-forestry technologies that are essential for restoration of soil fertility and prevention of erosion, thus contributing toward preserving the aquatic ecosystems of the lake.

The issues to be addressed to enhance linkage between Bushara Island camp and conservation revolve around the need for management guidelines of all tourism related activities on the lake ensuring strict environmental management and from time to time environment audits of the enterprises to preserve the integrity of the lake. The National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) and the National Wetlands Program need to coordinate their operations to ensure that both the policy and regulatory mechanisms that have been put in place to-date are implemented.

### **3.3.6 Lessons Learned from Bushara Island**

The establishment of Bushara Island provides the following lessons for other community-based local enterprise initiatives:

In establishing community-based enterprises, there is need to assess the strength of the local stakeholder groups and the viability of its geographical position. For example, the location of the Bushara Island Camp presents considerable opportunities in the eco-tourism industry given its idyllic setting on the lake.

**Recruitment:** It is better to start slow and work with existing local community institutions and expertise. The gradual approach takes time because the local community requires more training to be self-sufficient in the administrative running of the campsite. But in this way the local community expertise/ capacity can be developed and at the same time gives a sense of ownership of the enterprise to the community.

**Support to the community:** Such support includes marketing and training. Support is necessary because the community lack the following: expertise in business skills, hospitality, records and book keeping.

**Good training:** Capacity-building enables the community to grow and mature the necessary business, skills and knowledge required. On-site training reduces the costs of training in a capital city.

**Supervisory role:** Right from the initial stages of enterprise development, it is important to offer a supervisory role to the members of the community involved in enterprise management. Avoid a "one-man show", however, for it does not encourage autonomy nor cultivate a sense of ownership of the enterprise.

**Accountability and transparency:** There is a need for rigorous accounting and bookkeeping to track expenses. But this requires that the enterprise starts small and allows systems to grow, with potential for learning and adjustments.

The Bushara Island Camp did not have competitors for its first four years. It was therefore able to provide basic services and build up strength in its financial and human resources. This enabled the camp to develop greater efficiency and capacity to compete and provide investment in capital expenditure.

### **3.3.7 Key Factors to Drive Maximum Impact of Buhoma Community Rest Camp, Amajembere Iwachu Campground and Bushara Island Camp**

For enterprises like Buhoma Rest Camp, Amajembere Iwachu community campground and Bushara Island Camp to thrive over the long-term, a number of improvements will need to be implemented in the broader social environment.

- **Political Stability:** In view of the high potential tourism capacity the security and political relations need to be improved with neighboring states.

- **Financing:** Credit facilities currently have unrealistic high interest rates of 28%. Such a credit environment is not attractive for foreign investors.
- **Marketing:** A more aggressive international marketing campaign needs to be implemented. This includes participating in the World Trade Fair and promoting the image of the country with the international media.
- **Development of Infrastructure:** Appropriate communication network facilities from roads to email services.
- **Diversity of the Product:** Using gorilla trekking as the principal focus for diversification, a wide range of alternatives can be marketed as tourism products.

### **3.4 Association Solidaire des Femmes Rwandaise (ASOFERWA) in Kinyigi**

ASOFERWA represents an effort by an association of widows who have lost their husbands during the genocide. A tourist hostel (village touristique) has been rehabilitated by ASOFERWA in Kinyigi bordering the periphery of the Virunga National Park. The hostel is relatively new but has already shown to provide revenue ensuring the long-term sustainability of the enterprise. 50% of the generated funds will be dedicated to the development of the area such as building of schools and helping orphan genocide victims.

The hostel features 25 rooms and two chalets all equipped with the necessary facilities such as running water and electricity. Telecommunication facilities were expected to be functional by the end of 2000. A restaurant and a meeting room have been included in the establishment and are fully functional.

### **3.5 Lessons Learned from the Four Cases for Future Enterprise Development.**

A number of issues have been captured in the case studies, which could be considered as lessons for the future development of enterprises in the Virungas. These include:

- Security is a distinct concern of all tourists. The better the security, the more attractive the destination is for the tourists.
- Uganda and Rwanda cannot rely solely on gorilla trekking. Greater diversification of tourism products could accommodate much higher numbers of visitors.
- Greater development of business culture is required to expand tourism.
- Coordination of conservation and development by the different institutions and NGOs in the greater Virunga will be required to achieve large-scale conservation and economic impact.
- Local communities need to see far more benefits from tourism if such benefits are to be an incentive for conservation.

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